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EDITORIAL COMMENT



THE PATH OF DUTY

IN the transition from the sisterhood of the old ideals to that of the new something precious has been lost.

For the gentle, obedient, and devoted, though often totally unskilled and incompetent, sister we have substituted the nurse of to-day, the capable, educated, well-trained, and self-reliant woman, who can meet her responsibilities, who can also be obedient to proper authority, and gentle where gentleness is needed. The transformation wrought in our hospitals since training-schools were introduced, and nurses of this type were the outcome, is complete, and it will always be the glory of the modern nursing order that it did for hospitals and the sick within them what neither the clergy nor the charitable public nor the physicians themselves were able to accomplish; and not only hospitals, but homes everywhere, have reaped and are reaping abundantly every day the harvest that has followed from the foundation of the first training-schools.

If we have clearly gained so much, what is it, then, that we have lost in the transition which is worth keeping? When weighed in the balance, where are we found wanting? We answer unhesitatingly, in devotion to duty—in *unfaltering* devotion to duty as we know it. Whatever may have been the failings of the sisterhoods from our stand-point, which makes the care of the sick a matter worthy of the highest intelligence and skill, as well as of a prolonged and careful preparation, a matter, moreover, which admits of no divided allegiance, of their devotion to duty we have handed down to us a splendid and unquestionable record of centuries. It comes alike from hospitals during the terrible epidemics of past ages, from the homes of poverty and distress, and from the battle-fields of all times. We are filled with admiration as we read of the hard-

ships borne with fortitude, of patient toil, and of the tender charity, the complete obliviousness of self, with which these sisters faced and performed to the best of their ability whatever task was required of them. We may well ask what inspired them to so noble a response to the call of duty, and seek for ourselves some like inspiration.

For it is undeniable that unwillingness to devote herself to any really distasteful task, or steadily to pursue any work in which difficulties arise, is a growing tendency of the nurse of to-day, though we must admit at once that it is a tendency not limited to the nursing ranks. The drift, however, is so dangerous, not only to our work, but to ourselves, to our very souls, that we do well to subject ourselves to a rigid self-scrutiny and apply a wholesome remedy before the trouble has gone beyond control.

If we are asked to say by what particular signs we recognize so grave a disorder, we need not go further than to point out one single aspect of one branch of our work—namely, the registries, where nurses are permitted to exclude, and do exclude, almost any kind of “case” which they may feel disinclined, or that is not convenient at the moment, to undertake. We have heard of registries where nurses of excellent training in all branches of their work, and therefore with no shadow of reason for refusing to do it, simply decline to answer the calls of patients whom they do not feel inclined to go to. One nurse excludes children, another infectious diseases, another declines to take care of men, while several quite competent women cannot be persuaded to take obstetrical cases; one will not nurse in the city, while another will not answer calls out of it, while still another objects to being sent to certain districts of the city. There are some who will not nurse for certain physicians. Here and there are nurses who, suffering under the disadvantage of a small income, are not obliged to continue steadily at work, and we find them placing their poor services (for spasmodic work is always poor work) at the disposal of the sick whenever they happen to feel like it or by some unusual extravagance have run out of pocket money. An inspection of registry-books and some conversation with those who are conducting registries in certain places will show that these instances are in no way exaggerated, but rather that they may be added to in ways which it humiliates us even to hear of.

Such failure to meet our highest obligations, such violation of our common standards of right and duty, cannot be too sternly censured. The women who permit themselves to conduct their professional work in this manner are in this, at least, wrong through and through. But what shall we say of the registries which allow such latitude in the government of their work, what ground have they to ask the support and confidence of a community?

In writing this we are not unmindful of the number, greater by far, of those good women upon whom the public depends, women who never falter nor flinch, but face the work they have undertaken with courage and with steadiness of purpose, willing and glad to give all that they have in them to meet the needs of sick and suffering humanity. These are the bulwark of our profession, the women who constantly uphold its best traditions, even at much cost to themselves, and, as we have said, they are many. But the others to whom our attention has been directed with some anxiety for several years are a growing body, and they too are establishing traditions—traditions foreign to the whole spirit of nursing as we understand it. Are we willing that such anywhere should come to prevail? We need among us a new conception of the word duty.

THE WORK FOR THE YEAR

WITH October not only the JOURNAL year begins, but activity in the different branches of all nursing organizations commences, and before the end of the month the programmes for the winter's work will be outlined.

As we look over the whole broad field there are a number of subjects which present themselves that seem to be of especially vital importance at this time in which all branches and sections are equally concerned. There would seem to be no new lines of development needing great attention in the immediate future, but any amount of work already commenced is waiting to be built up, strengthened, and broadened in many directions, requiring persistent, courageous coöperation in all the different branches of our chain of organization.

The *alumnæ* associations and local clubs may be described as the primary departments of our entire organization system. In these departments the nurse receives her first lesson in coöperative work, in which the majority rules. She has her first drill in committee duties and learns to speak before a hundred pair of eyes without embarrassment. In just the proportion that a local society is well organized and governed its members are prepared for the higher duties of the State and national associations, and make valuable workers as delegates and members when the time comes for them to serve.

Thus it is seen that the building process which is to make of State registration an uplifting power, the Course in Hospital Economics a memorial to the nurses of this generation, and the JOURNAL the greatest thing of the kind ever undertaken, must commence and be persistently advanced month after month in the local societies.

All three of these important branches of our organization work are

dragging somewhat at the present time because of a want of interest, caused largely, we believe, by lack of proper enlightenment on the part of the great rank and file in the nursing profession.

In all reform work, either at home or abroad, of whatever character, history repeats itself. There are always the fearless leaders who do the work of the pioneer period, surmounting all obstacles by their courage and enthusiasm, and then follows that discouraging time when the very people for whom the work has been done have to be educated to a full knowledge of the benefits that it is to bring to them.

In our organization work the pioneer period is passed. The start has been splendid. We have been carried along by the courage and enthusiasm of the leaders. There have been hundreds of intelligent followers and supporters, but we now seem to have reached the second period when the great multitude must be educated to a knowledge of the advantages which have been gained thus far in which they are to share, and to be stimulated to greater activity in carrying their portion of the burden.

There is nothing discouraging in the situation, but it is to the alumnae associations and local clubs that we turn for the education, now so essential, of the great rank and file, who must become as familiar with all the conditions governing State registration as they are with the multiplication table. They must be aroused to an interest in the Course in Hospital Economics, and they should be made to feel their professional obligations to the JOURNAL.

We venture to suggest that these three subjects be given a few minutes' consideration at every meeting held this year, that there shall be a special committee for each subject, to give first the history and then the progress as the winter advances, just the facts from month to month, until every member is fully informed.

REGISTRATION.

The Committee on Registration can find a complete history of the subject running through the files of this JOURNAL, beginning with the first number. Members should be made familiar with the law in other States as well as their own, and every new bill that is passed should be carefully considered. *How* to register should be explained over and over again, and those who find the official blanks complicated and confusing should be assisted in filling out their papers.

THE ECONOMICS COURSE.

The Course in Hospital Economics should be studied in the same manner and reported upon each month. Already the work has commenced. Miss Glenn, of Chicago, and a graduate of the course, has

written an article in the *Illinois State Association Quarterly* in which she presents the advantages of the course in a very practical manner. On September 7 Miss Ida R. Palmer, graduate of the course in 1902, was the guest of the Erie County Alumnæ of Buffalo, speaking for the Economics Course, and at the meeting of the Homœopathic Alumnæ of Rochester, September 13, Miss Balcum, of the Class of 1904, presented the same subject, which resulted in a vote being carried that each member should contribute one day's earnings to the endowment fund. With a little effort on the part of a special committee this subject can be made interesting and much be accomplished.

THE JOURNAL.

Hardly a day passes that we do not have it borne in upon us that scores of alumnæ members are still ignorant of the fact that THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING was established by a committee appointed from the Associated Alumnæ to be the official organ, first and foremost, of that society, its principal feature being that it was owned, edited, and managed by nurses, all members of the Associated Alumnæ, and consequently members of some local alumnæ; but in the face of all that has been said about the JOURNAL, and all that has been done for its magnificent success, scores of alumnæ members persist in addressing the editor as "Dear Sir."

We appeal to the alumnæ associations to at least make their members appreciate the fact that the JOURNAL is their own work, for without the action of the Associated Alumnæ, of which they are part, it would never have come into existence, and that they owe to it allegiance and support.

Without the JOURNAL our organization work on its present grand scale would be chaotic, if it existed at all. As it is, by means of the JOURNAL the North and the South, the East and the West, are developing on almost identical lines. Standards are becoming more and more uniform, and in all progress the essential points are the same everywhere.

WHAT THE JOURNAL REPRESENTS.

The JOURNAL will be used this year as the official organ of the International Council of Nurses and the Hospital Economics Association, two important educational organizations whose aims are in direct accord with the work for which the JOURNAL was established. We shall continue to give space to the Guild of St. Barnabas until such time as that society can make convenient and satisfactory arrangements for publication elsewhere. As we stated last month, the demand for space for material of a purely educational character has been far in excess of the

JOURNAL's financial development, and to make space for the reports of the new societies we have felt obliged to restrict our official representation to those organizations that are directly educational in their aims. Having entered into such a compact with a society we consider ourselves under obligation to give space for whatever official material we are asked to publish, in return for which we expect the privilege and courtesy of being the first to publish such reports, etc., and that the JOURNAL's interests will be duly advanced by all organizations with which it is affiliated.

In the near future the following subjects will be discussed in our pages:

In what way will the higher education affect the conditions of work of the nurse in private practice?

Has the time come when training-schools should open their doors to young women qualified for entrance in all points but color?

In State registration, why is it considered undesirable to have physicians on the Examining Boards?

In teaching nurses the theory of medicine, where shall the lines be drawn?

Who are the people best qualified to judge of what nurses shall be taught?

TIME TO RENEW.

October is the month when a large number of subscriptions expire, and we remind our readers that unless renewals are made promptly there is danger of the edition being out of print. With the best of calculating it will happen that some numbers run out earlier than others, and we are always very sorry when we cannot supply a former subscriber.

We also request all who find the JOURNAL of use to them to help spread its influence by securing one new subscriber, and in this way help in the education of the great rank and file, and at the same time assist the JOURNAL in its financial development.

MRS. LOUNSBERY'S RESIGNATION.

Mrs. Harriet Camp Lounsbery, whose resignation from our staff of collaborators we announce with much regret, is the kind of nurse whom matrimony has not spoiled. Living in an isolated section,—Charleston-on-Kanawha, W. Va.,—she has kept in very close touch with all progress in nursing, doing much in a quiet way for the JOURNAL, leading in the movement for State registration in West Virginia, and demonstrating in a thousand ways that with her “once a nurse is to be always a nurse.” In a personal letter to the editor, in which she expresses feelingly her regret in severing her official connection with the JOURNAL, Mrs. Lounsbery says: “The last number of the JOURNAL

(August) is so fine I congratulate you most heartily on it. The Hospital Economics Course interests me deeply, as Miss Alline is one of my graduates. I, as one of the old-time superintendents who had to feel her way and who needed so much the support of other superintendents, would love to attend the superintendents' meeting, but I doubt if I can. Several of my graduates will be there, though, and that will do more good."

To the "older women," like Mrs. Lounsbury, who are "out of the running," but who never lose sight of the battle in the distance, every step in nursing progress is like the smell of powder and the sound of the bugle to an old war-horse. No matter how strong the home ties, if they ever loved their profession they long to be in the midst of the fray; but it is, after all, their influence with "some of their graduates" that is carrying forward the good work. There can never be another generation of pioneers in nursing, and we doubt if there will ever be another group of nurses made of such metal as the "old war-horses" who fought their way through those pioneer conditions. The fact that Mrs. Lounsbury's heart is always with us is something of a consolation, but we take her name off of our roll with great unwillingness.

THE JAPANESE RED CROSS

MANY of our readers are doubtless familiar with Mr. George Kennan's article on "The Japanese Red Cross" published in the *Outlook* of September 3. Mr. Kennan is the special war correspondent in the Far East for the *Outlook*. He is an ex-officer of the American Red Cross Society, and he deals with his subject with masterful clearness.

It is interesting to know that the fundamental principles of the Red Cross relief work dates back in Japan to long before the Geneva Convention and six or seven years before the Red Cross was organized in the United States. After giving in minute detail a history of the origin of the society in Japan and a full description of its equipment and methods of operation at the present time, in which the superiority of the nursing service is dwelt upon, he states that in the unanimous opinion of competent judges the Japanese Red Cross is fully equal to that of any country in Europe "and so far superior to that of the United States that comparison was hardly possible."

In the face of the facts and figures presented by so high an authority as Mr. Kennan, we can only draw the conclusion that when the Japanese Government accepted the services of the Spanish War nurses its only motive could have been the hope of arousing political sympathy in the United States, and not because their services as nurses were either needed or desired.

In the light of Mr. Kennan's article, and in the face of the criticisms that has been spread broadcast over the country by the war correspondents, it is much to be regretted that the conditions in Japan were not more carefully investigated by the Spanish War nurses, who, through unwise and sentimental leadership, have subjected the entire nursing profession in the United States to the condemnation and ridicule of the world.

Mr. Kennan's article is well worth careful study. We make one quotation that should be considered by those interested in the reorganization of the American Red Cross Society. Speaking of the perfect coöperation between the Japanese Red Cross Society and the medical department of the army he says:

"The most noteworthy difference between the American Red Cross and the Red Cross of Japan is to be found in the relations that they sustain to their respective governments, and particularly to the Departments of War and the Navy. The Red Cross in the United States has always been an independent organization, not connected in any direct way with the military establishment, nor subject in time of war to the direct control and supervision of the military authorities. In Japan, on the contrary, by virtue of the imperial ordinance of December 2, 1901, the Red Cross in time of war becomes virtually a part of the medical staff of the army and navy, and the members of its field force—surgeons, nurses, and attendants—are made subject not only to military direction, but to military discipline. The regulations of the society specifically state that 'the work of the relief corps shall be carried on in accordance with the regulations of the sanitary service of the army and navy in time of war, and under the direction and control of the military and naval authorities to whom they are respectively attached. Should the members of the relief staff run against discipline, disobey orders, or be found incompetent for their duties, they may be dealt with in accordance with the army or the navy regulations. The president shall prepare every year, not later than September 30, two reports on the preparations made for relief in time of war, one for the army and the other for the navy, for one year, commencing with April 1 of the following year, and submit the same to the Ministers of the respective departments.'

"There can be little doubt, it seems to me, that in making the Red Cross an auxiliary part of the regular medical and sanitary service of the army and navy, and in subjecting its field workers to military control and discipline, Japan has acted wisely and prudently. The independent organization of the Red Cross in the United States and the semi-independent operations of its field force in time of war have always given rise to a certain amount of friction, jealousy, and ill-feeling. When our

Red Cross goes to the front at the beginning of a campaign, even although it may go with the permission of the President, it seems by its attitude to say to the medical staff of the army, 'You are not competent to do the work that will devolve upon you, and we have come down here to supplement your deficiencies. We shall not be bound, however, by your methods, nor submit to your dictation. We have certain ideas of our own with regard to relief work, and we purpose to carry them out in our own way regardless of your organization.' The mere presence on the battlefield of an independent body of surgeons and nurses is in itself a sort of reflection upon the competency of the army's medical department, and it is resented, more or less actively, by the regular officers of the medical staff. That this was the case in the Cuban campaign I know from my own experience and from statements that were made to me by officials in the War Department and by the commanding general in the field. If the relief corps of the Red Cross acted in coöperation with the military authorities and under the latter's direction, their mutual relations would be greatly improved and the service rendered by both would probably be more efficient. Unity of plan and direction are as necessary to success in relief work as they are in military strategy, and the experience of Japan certainly shows that the people of a country will support just as generously and enthusiastically a Red Cross that is under the direction of the military authorities as a Red Cross that tries to take, in the field, an attitude of quasi-independence."

REPORTS FROM THE WAR.

It seems to be generally conceded that the Japanese are giving points to the Western civilization in the management of the sick and wounded of the army in a manner most surprising. Not only are their surgeons up to date in all modern methods of treatment and surgery, but the sanitary management of the camps is far beyond anything ever seen either in England or the United States, judging from the Spanish War camps in the South. The *London Post* says:

"The surgeons are also sanitary engineers, and they select the sites for camps, arrange camp drainage, and inspect all water supplies. The Japanese army surgeons are doing valuable work in inspecting water supplies. It is the rule of the Japanese armies in the field to send a corps of medical experts in advance, and before the army pitches camp every source of water supply in the vicinity and every well has been chemically analyzed. Placards are placed at all places where there is water. Some of the placards read: 'This water is good;' others, 'This water is bad;' and others, 'This water should not be used unless it is boiled for half an hour.' These precautions and the good ration in use prevent intestinal

troubles, and, of the thousand or more sick and wounded in Tokio there are only six cases of intestinal affections, a like number of dysentery cases, and five typhus cases, all of them convalescent at the date of writing."

Praises are also being sung all over the world of the superiority of the Japanese nursing service, and the importance attached to nursing by the Japanese Government may be judged from the fact that in the hospital ships there is one nurse for every three patients. The force of trained nurses is sufficient, no volunteers being needed, and they have conformed to army discipline and conducted themselves with dignity most commendable.

In just the proportion that Japan is surprising the civilized world with its advanced methods, Russia is being severely criticised for neglect of the wounded, it being said there is much needless suffering. In the hospitals supplies and service are short, water is bad, dirt is everywhere, and sanitary conditions are of the worst. The facilities for transporting the sick and wounded are without regard to the comfort of the patient.

PROGRESS OF STATE REGISTRATION

THERE is no special report from the States this month, but announcement of the New York meeting will be found in the Official Department.

The British nurses have gained a great victory in securing the indorsement of the British Medical Association, which has officially declared in favor of State registration for nurses.

We congratulate the British nurses who are carrying the burden of the registration work.

NURSES FOR MISSION WORK IN ALASKA

NURSES who are interested in mission work should read Mr. Wood's appeal to the Editor for nurses to go to Alaska which is printed in full on another page. Also the letters on the same subject found in the pages devoted to the Guild of St. Barnabas. There must be nurses ready and willing to take up this work, and we hope through the JOURNAL to be able to reach them.

HOURLY NURSING

WE are constantly receiving letters from nurses asking for information about hourly nursing, how it is conducted, and if it pays, and we would like very much to have those who are engaged in this branch of the work contribute the result of their experience to the readers of the JOURNAL.

Originally, when a nurse decided to take up hourly nursing she had cards printed and sent to the physicians of the city giving the terms upon which her services could be secured. The charges were usually from fifty cents upward for a visit of an hour, with five dollars for an operation or an obstetrical case. The coöperation of several physicians was necessary to enable her to make a good start.

Visiting and district nursing for the poor has developed very greatly during the last few years, but we have heard little of the growth of hourly nursing on a really paying basis. Many nurses whom we have known have done some massage at the same time, and in that way made a very comfortable income.

This is a subject upon which the profession needs enlightenment, and we solicit information from those who can speak from experience—either successful or unsuccessful—for the benefit of our readers in many sections of the country who desire to know what the experience of other nurses has been.

A GREAT LOSS

DR. WILLIAM OSLER, physician-in-chief of the Johns Hopkins Hospital since its foundation, and well known throughout the country as a great physician, writer, and teacher, has been invited to become Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford University and leaves Baltimore next June. This is the first call from any of the great English universities to a scientific man in this country, and is considered the greatest distinction that could possibly come to a medical man. Johns Hopkins, Baltimore, and most of all Canada, Dr. Osler's native country, must feel a just pride that so great an honor should come to one belonging in a way to each of them. To measure the loss which his departure will mean to the Johns Hopkins Hospital and Baltimore is well-nigh impossible, for we doubt if in many ways he can ever be replaced, assuredly not in the affections of those with whom he has been living and working for the last fifteen years, of physicians, students, nurses. Few men anywhere have been so greatly beloved by all classes of people.

NURSES FOR PANAMA

MISS HIBBARD, who is in charge of the hospital of the Panama Commission, has organized the nursing department on the eight-hour system for day nurses and ten hours for night duty. Registered nurses are to receive preference in selection. Nurses for this service must expect crude conditions in the beginning, and it is useless for anyone to go out who cannot endure hardship and meet trials bravely, and be able to work with

others without friction. The hospital is beautifully situated, and Miss Hibbard describes the climate as being very delightful.

A NEW LOCAL JOURNAL

THE *Journal of the California State Nurses' Association* made its first appearance in the journalistic world in August, and is a most attractive little magazine. Its aims are to elevate the nursing standards on the Pacific coast, and it will be published quarterly after February if the subscriptions received before December 1 warrant so frequent an issue.

These little local magazines are great educators, for before we can expect anything of nurses in the broader fields of professional work they must be interested in the affairs and conditions of their home surroundings. California is greatly isolated from the larger nursing centres, and in the work of registration, for which the State association is organized, the *Journal* will be a powerful factor. The chairman of the Committee on Publication is Miss Genevieve Cooke, 140 Fern Avenue, San Francisco, and the subscription price is sixty cents per year. We welcome the *California Journal* and wish it lasting success.

DEATH OF A PROMINENT WOMAN

As we close our pages the notice reaches us of the death of Mrs. M. H. Lawrence, superintendent of the Rex Hospital at Raleigh, N. C., and president of the Nurse Board of Examiners of that State. Mrs. Lawrence had been seriously ill and went to the home of a friend in Lynn, Mass., to recuperate. Her death occurred September 10.

STATE MEETINGS

WE have held our pages for the programme of the Pennsylvania State meeting, to be held in Philadelphia October 26, 27, 28, but as it has failed to come to hand we are obliged to go to press without it.

The Ohio State Nurses' Association will hold its first annual meeting in Columbus on October 18, 19.

